

# ROMANS SEASON 2

## HOW THE GOSPEL WORKS

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### CONNECT *BREAK THE ICE AND GET PEOPLE TALKING*

- What's one high and one low from the past week?
  - When you were younger, was there a life goal that you were determined to reach? How did you imagine you'd feel when you reached it?
  - What motivates you to do good work?
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### TRUTH *UNDERSTAND AND DISCUSS THE SCRIPTURE'S MEANING*

This week we're zooming out and looking back over season two in Romans. Season one (chapters 1-4) showed us our need for the gospel. Paul's claim is quite radical—that if your need for the gospel isn't met, no other need can be met in a meaningful, lasting way. When our need for the gospel is met, however, it transforms not just our actions but our experience in day-to-day life. We can think about what the gospel does like this: The gospel gives us a new identity, which forms activity, which changes our reality. (Identity → Activity → Reality)

#### Identity

**READ:** Romans 5:1-2

**DISCUSS:** If someone asked you to explain what it means to be "justified," what would you say?

When God justifies someone, he counts that person "righteous," or said another way, he puts them right. Here we have a major difference between Christianity and other ways of thinking. There's no *activity* a person can do to have their *identity* made right. Yet our activity and our reality flow downstream from who we are. If you could heal your own identity by moving to the right city, making a good pile of money, or finding someone you love, don't you think we'd have lots of examples of that happening? It doesn't work. The good news of the gospel is that God goes to the core of who we are and heals what's broken. We are righteous, alive in Christ, dead to sin, Spirit-empowered, and loved children.

#### Activity

**READ:** Romans 6:1-2

**DISCUSS:** Given what God does to our identity through the gospel, what's one change you can think of that it produces in the life of a Christian?

This "newness of life" made possible through the gospel is something believers must "walk in." A person isn't saved by activity, but their activity sure changes a lot once their identity is changed. Sin isn't just a moment of breaking the rules; it's a symptom of a broken identity. A healed identity opens the door for healthy decisions. It's really important to remember, however, Paul's focus in chapter seven and eight—that we get the power for this

new activity through the Spirit at work inside of us. The Spirit leads, we keep in step. God is glorified and we are satisfied.

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## **GRACE** *SEE HOW THE PASSAGE CONNECTS TO JESUS*

### **Reality**

**READ:** Romans 8:37-39

**DISCUSS:** What stands out to you from these verses and why?

The first reality change Paul told us about in season two was “peace with God”(Rom 5:1). It didn’t stop there. As the chapters followed, we’re told about “life and peace” flooding into the believer’s life, about patient fortitude in the middle of suffering, about being “convinced” of God’s love and our sense of belonging in his family. The gospel heals our identity and produces a whole new experience in our life. This transformation in our existential reality is a great gift of through the gospel, and Paul constantly reminds us who’s at the center of the gospel—Jesus Christ, who died so that we could be made right.

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## **CHANGE** *APPLY THE PASSAGE TO OUR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS*

- What did you learn from this discussion and how can you apply it to your life?
- Is fear or anxiousness showing up in any areas of your life? How can you draw on your identity in Christ to silence those fears?
- Is there any sinful “activity” in your life that’s out of sync with your identity in Christ? What do you need to do to change it?

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## **PRAYER** *RESPOND TO THE PASSAGE IN PRAYER*

- Spend some time celebrating God’s goodness in sending Jesus and giving you a new identity.
- Pray for a deepening experience of your new identity in Christ.

### **Discipleship Check-In**

- Have you read your Bible consistently the past week?
- Who is someone you're praying to share Jesus with this week, and what's one way you can love them well?